

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (original) A process for the preparation of thermostable, discrete, solid particles containing lactoferrin embedded in a protein-and/or starch-based carrier matrix which process is characterized by the steps of

(a) adding to a horizontal screw extruder the carrier matrix, lactoferrin and, optionally, an internal lubricant,

(b) mixing these components in the extruder under low shear and temperature conditions to obtain a homogeneous formable mixture,

(c) extruding and cutting said formable mixture into pieces and, optionally,

(d) drying said pieces.

2. (original) A process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the carrier matrix comprises wheat starch and durum wheat flour.

3. (currently amended) A process as claimed in claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ wherein lactoferrin is added in form of an aqueous solution or a dry powder.

4. (currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1-3~~ claim 1 wherein a vegetable oil is used as internal lubricant.

5. (currently amended) A process as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1-4~~ claim 1 wherein the temperature in the extruder under working conditions is below about 60°C.

6. (original) Thermostable, discrete, solid particles containing lactoferrin embedded in a protein- and/or starch-based carrier matrix.

7. (currently amended) Thermostable, discrete, solid ~~Solid particles containing lactoferrin embedded in a protein- and/or starch-based carrier matrix according to claim 6,~~ obtained by a process as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1-5~~ claim 1.

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8. (currently amended) Solid particles according to claim 6 ~~or claim 7~~ for use as animal feed or food supplements.

9. (currently amended) A food or animal feed supplement composition on the basis of solid particles according to ~~claims 6-8~~ claim 6.

10. (original) A food or an animal feed supplemented with a composition as claimed in claim 9.